## HYPOTHERMIA

is a potentially fatal condition that occurs when body temperature drops below 95° F. and the body loses heat faster than it can be replaced. Hypothermia is a medical emergency and immediate help should be called by dialing 911.

## IMPORTANT FACTS

- Older persons exposed to severe cold and or brisk winds can become hypothermic very quickly.
- Accidential hypothermia can result from extended exposure to mildly cool room temperatures below 70° F.
- Hypothermia causes the mind to become confused and prevents people from seeking help.
- Many older persons die in their own homes because they, or their friends and relatives, do not recognize symptoms of hypothermia until it is too late.

## PRECAUTIONS

- Wear several layers of warm, loose clothing. Wool or synthetic is better than cotton.
- Keep the head and neck covered, while awake or asleep.
- Do not use plastic bags as coverings.
- Sleep with extra clothes and blankets.
- Keep clothing dry at all times.

## DANGER SIGNS

- Mental confusion and forgetfulness
- Difficulty speaking
- Very slow, shallow breathing
- Slow, sometimes irregular heartbeat
- Lethargy
- Trembling on one side of the body
- Pale or puffy skin
- Cold, stiff muscles
- Shivering - may or may not be evident

## DOs and DON'Ts
### IF HYPOTHERMIA IS SUSPECTED

- Do call a doctor or 911 immediately.
- Do make sure the person is warm and dry. Move to a warm place and cover with blankets, towels or extra clothes, especially in head and neck areas.
- Do not administer any food, drink, alcohol or drugs. Alcohol actually decreases (worsens) the circulation.
- Do not raise legs, place hot water bottles on feet or apply any direct heat.
- Do not place the person in a hot shower or bath.
- Do not massage arms or legs.

## CHECK MEDICATIONS

Some prescription drugs can make a person more vulnerable to the cold. Medications for nervousness, depression, high blood pressure, or sleeping may cause a person to feel the cold more severely. Check with your doctor or pharmacist.

## WALK CAREFULLY

Older persons often suffer broken hips during the winter months from falls that occur more often indoors than outdoors. Shorter days may affect vision and the ability to move about safely. Make sure living areas are well lit.

## MAINTAIN GOOD NUTRITION

Good nutrition is especially important in winter. Hot nourishing meals and warm non-alcoholic drinks add heat to the body.

## WINTERIZE YOUR HOME

***Avoid costly repairs by taking steps to prevent frozen pipes.***

- Close interior valves to outside faucets, and open exterior valves.
- Wrap pipes that run through un-heated parts of the house with insulation and tape.

***Maintain a safe indoor temperature:***

- Weather-strip doors and windows.
- Add insulation where possible in attics, behind switch plates, etc.
- Set thermostat to 65-70° F.

## TAKE THE EDGE OFF WINTER HEATING BILLS

### *Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)*

Income-eligible persons, age 60 and over, whether homeowners or renters, may receive assitance with home heating bills. The HEAP program is open during the winter months. Benefits are paid directly to the heating vendor.

**For more information contact Nassau County, at (516) 227-7386**

## ENERGY EFFICIENCY

### *Weatherization Referral and Packaging Program (WRAP)*

HEAP-eligible households may also qualify for home weatherization services.

**For more information contact Nassau County, at (516) 227-7386**

## WINTER HEAT EMERGENCIES

If you are HEAP-eligible and you face a heating emergency such as:

- A broke furnace
- Less than 1/4 tank of oil and no money to get another delivery
- A shut-off notice from a utility

**Contact EAC: (516) 539-0150**
**Call Project Warmth: (631) 940-3757**

## UTILITY PROTECTIONS

Elderly utility customers in NY State, are protected by special rules enforced by the Public Service Commission (PSC).

The company must call you or make a personal visit 72 hours before - and the day of - the scheduled shutoff to work out a payment plan if you are elderly, blind, or disabled or if shutoff would take place between November 1 & April 15.

Service may be shut off for non-payment only betwen 8 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Thursday. Service may not be shut off on a holiday; on a day before a holiday; or during the two-week period which includes Christmas and New Year's Day.

**PSC HELPLINE: 1-800-342-3377**
*(8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m., business days)*

**PSC EMERGENCY HOTLINE:**
**1-800-342-3355** *(regarding shut-offs)*
*(7:30 a.m. - 7:30 p.m., business days)*


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01/2020 MB

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**JOSEPH SALADINO**

# COLD WEATHER *TIPS*

**The Department of Public Safety**
**(516) 677-5350**

**www.OysterBayTown.com**